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Chronology of the Khārijites Insurrection of Hamziyya in Sīstān (8th–9th Century). Its Outbreak and Fall

For many years, under the three 'Abbāsīd caliphs: Hārūn al-Rashīd and his two successors al-Amin and al-Ma'mūn, South-Eastern Persia was the field of activity of insurgents belonging to the Khārijite sect of Hamziyya, called so by later Muslim theologians after Ḥamza b. 'Abd Allāh al-Khārijī¹, its founder, leader and

¹ Goes by different names. Cf. *Tārīkh-i Sīstān*, ed. Malek osh-Shoarā Bahār, Tehrān 1317, acc. to index; Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, ed. de Goeje, III, pp. 638, 650; Ibn Kathīr, *Al-bidāya wa'l-nihāya fī ta'rikh*, Cairo 1932–1939, X, pp. 173, 186; Moṭahbar b. Ṭāhir al-Maḡdisī, *Le livre de la création*, ed. Cl. Huart, Paris 1899–1919, IV, pp. 102, 103; Malekshāh Ḥosein-e Sīstānī, *Ihyā' al-mulūk*, Tehrān 1344, p. 18; Gardēzī, *Zain al-akhbār*, ed. 'A. Ḥabībī, Tehrān 1347, pp. 131, 132; Ibn Fundūq, *Tārīkh-i Bayhaq*, ed. A. Bahmanyār, Tehrān 1317, p. 44; Ibn al-Athīr, *Al-kāmil fī'l-ta'rikh*, ed. C. J. Thornberg, Leiden 1851–1875, VI, pp. 103, 177; Ya'qūbī (Ibn Wāḍih), *Kitāb al-buldān*, ed. de Goeje, Leiden 1891, p. 304; Ibn Wāḍih, *Ta'rikh*, ed. M. T. Houtsma, Leiden 1883, II, p. 554; Baghdādī, *Al-farq bain al-firāq*, ed. Bulāq 1285, pp. 97–111; Maqrizī, *Khitaṭ*, ed. Bulāq 1270, II, p. 353; Mas'ūdī, *Murūj al-dhahab*, ed. and tr. Barbier de Meynard and A. J. Pavey de Courteille, Paris 1861–1877, X, p. 42; W. Barthold, *Turkestan down to the Mongol Invasion*, London 1928; ib. in Russian, Moskva 1963, p. 261; H. Laoust, *Les schismes dans l'Islam*, Paris 1964, p. 78; B. Spuler, *Iran in frühislamischer Zeit*, Wiesbaden 1952, pp. 53, 169; B. Składanek, *Powstanie charydżyckie Hamzy al-Hāriḡi w Sistanie*, „Przegląd Orientalistyczny”, 1, 1960, pp. 25–37; G. Scarcia, *Lo scambio di lettere tra Hārūn al-Rashīd e Ḥamza al-Hāriḡi secondo il „Ta'rikh-i Sīstān”*, AIUON, XIV, 1964, pp. 623–645; C. E. Bosworth, *Sīstān under the Arabs from the Islamic Conquest to the Rise of the Ṣaffārīds*, Rome 1968, pp. 91–104; C. E. Bosworth, *Tāhirīds and Ṣaffārīds*, in: *The Cambridge History of Iran*, Cambridge 1975, IV, pp. 96, 97, 108–109; B. S. Amoreti, *Sects and Heresies*, in: *The Cambridge History of Iran*, Cambridge 1975, IV, pp. 510–511; G. M. Meredith-Owens, *Hamza b. 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib*, EI²; 'A. Zarrīnkūb, *Do qarn-e sokūt*, Tehrān 1336, pp. 214–215; *Dāirat ol-mo'āref-e fārsī*, ed. Gh. Moṣāḥeb, Tehrān 1345, sub Ḥamzeye Xāreji; B. Składanek, *Est-ce que le caliphe Hārūn ar-Rashīd a écrit à Ḥamza al-Khāridjī de Sīstān*, in: *Yād-nāme-ye Irānī-ye Minorsky*, Tehrān 1969, p. 196 (uncorrected proof).

ideologist. Though if considered in term of the whole nation the insurrection of Ḥamza was an event of lesser importance in the period when almost the whole caliphate was shaken by anticaliphate and anti-Arab risings, it had an unquestionable influence upon the subsequent events in Persia in the 9th century, especially on the establishing of the Ṣaffārīds' state, being the first independent state in Muslim Persia. It left also an indelible imprint upon Persian literary and religious tradition².

Despite the considerable importance the insurrection of Ḥamza had for the studies concerning the restoration of sovereign state rule in Persia, lost by this country in the result of the Arab invasion, the problem has not been researched thoroughly yet. This particular situation results from incompleteness of the records, certain divergence of opinion on the subject in Persian and Arab sources, as well as from the fact that the insurrection took place not in the central territories but in the Eastern borderland. The date of its outbreak is unknown, and the time of its fall has not been determined even approximately.

According to Ṭabarī, Ibn al-Athīr and Baghdādī the insurrection led by Ḥamza al-Khārījī broke out in Khorāsān in 179/795³, yet in the chronicle dealing with the history of Sīstān we find a later date, i.e. 181 A.H. which, after being transferred by a Soviet historian A. Yakubovskiy into 798 A.D., was subsequently recognized by him as the date of the outbreak of the insurrection. He linked this fact causally with the two-years period of the administration of 'Alī b. 'Isā favoured by Hārūn al-Rashīd against the opinion of quite a number of persons⁴. Arithmetic preponderance of the earlier date cannot be treated as an argument solving this problem. Besides, quotations from the above mentioned Ṭabarī or Ibn al-Athīr will not solve this contradiction as Ṭabarī presented the information on the outbreak of Ḥamziyya insurrection in a single utterance, and the works of Ibn al-Athīr and Baghdādī are merely further compilations and secondary sources in this particular case. Ṭabarī who was as a matter of fact nearly a contemporary of the discussed events, allotted to the insurrection as much space as was necessary for the description of the caliphate history. In proportion it was not much but even then he gave some unprecise and sometimes incorrect data (see below). In this situation we must rely almost entirely on the local chronicles covering the period as close as possible to the discussed time and events.

As the *Tārīkh-i Sīstān* informs, the first battle between the caliphate forces and the Ḥamziyya insurgents was fought on a Friday in shawwāl 181 A.H.⁵ which may correspond to one of the four dates of our era: November 29th, December 6th, December 13th, December 20th 797 A.D. Even at this stage of our considerations

² Z. Šafā, *Tārīkh-e adabiyāt dar Irān*, Tehrān 1342, I, pp. 34-35; G. M. Meredith-Owens, *Hamza b. 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib*, p. 53.

³ Ṭab., III, p. 638; Ibn al-Athīr, VI, p. 101; Baghdādī, p. 79; Ibn Kathīr, X, p. 173.

⁴ N. Pigulevskaya, *Istoriya Irana*, Leningrad 1959, pp. 110-111; Ṭab., III, p. 702.

⁵ *Tārīkh-i Sīstān*, p. 156 v. 9.

we can ascertain that the date 798 mentioned above as the beginning of the disturbances is too late. Therefore let us discuss more carefully the context of this information.

In this part of the chronicle, a short piece of information about the battle of 181/797 is preceded by a few sentences about the birth of Ḥamza, his quarrel with an 'āmil in Bādghēs, the flight from persecutions, and finally, the return to Sīstān with a group of the survivors of the Khārijite insurrection in 'Irāq, led by Qaṭarī b. al-Fujā'a. The chronicler placed the description of Ḥamza's first deeds immediately after the information about a new governor's arrival in Sīstān which occurred early in 180 A.H.⁶ This year began on March 16th 796 A.D. Such a sequence of events in the chronicle explicitly shows that at that point the chronological order in its arrangement was broken as not only the birth of Ḥamza, which is obvious, but also the whole cycle of the heroic deeds mentioned in his biography could not occur in the two years' period between 180/796 and the year of the first battle in 181/797. First, when starting a quarrel with an 'āmil, Ḥamza already must have been a leader of a group. Taking flight from the 'āmil Ḥamza was a well known person, though in a comparatively limited circle, and had some charisma, as well as a suitable, though not too much organizing experience. Secondly, unless he satisfied these conditions he would not be able to draw the survivors of the Qaṭarī insurrection to his side, bring them to Sīstān and furthermore to take over during these two years the leadership of the powerful Khārijite movement in Sīstān, comprising at that time 5 thousand men⁷. There seems to be a justifiable supposition that the period from the emergence of Ḥamza as the insurgents' leader till the day of the open battle with the caliphate forces could not be very short for, what Ḥamza achieved, i.e. esteem, needs both time and experience and two years are not enough for it.

Because of the unprecise construction of this fragment in the *Tārikh-i Sīstān* we cannot determine anything definite through negative hypotheses let us turn to another chronicle, that is the *Zain al-akhbār* by Gardēzī.

Ḥamza's fight with the 'āmil and his escape from Sīstān is confirmed by another source. According to the *Zain al-akhbār*, Ḥamza had to take flight to Kōhistān after some vaguely defined incident, which happened when Maṣṣūr b. Yazīd was a governor. The *Tārikh-i Sīstān* informs that approximately in this period Ḥamza had to leave Sīstān and that he returned with the above mentioned partisans of Qaṭarī. As they were active in Sīstān it is possible they appeared also in the neighbouring Kōhistān⁸. Dīnawarī writes about a rebellion in Khorāsān in 180/795 giving only a single detail. We learn from him that an 'āmil perished then in a successful attempt on his life⁹. Though we have definitely not heard before about that

⁶ Ibid., p. 155 v. 13 ff.

⁷ Ibid., p. 156.

⁸ *Zain al-Akhbār*, p. 131.

⁹ al-Dīnawarī, *Akhbār al-ṭiwāl*, ed. Girgass, Leiden 1888, p. 386.

official being killed in the quarrel with Ḥamza, there are no evidences enabling us to question the validity of the information given by Dīnawarī. The fact of Ḥamza's flight is not only compatible with the assassination of the 'āmīl but may also be regarded as completion of this event. Such circumstances, therefore, as an attempt on the 'āmīl's life (struggle against the caliphate fiscus was one of the principles of the Ḥamziyya ideology), place of this attempt (Bādghēs can be considered a part of Khorāsān) and the time of the attempt enable us to ascertain that these are the events in which Ḥamza participated.

Gardēzī was well informed about the insurrection though he presented his knowledge in a rather chaotic way. He mentions Ḥamza for the first time in the chapter dealing with the period in which the Eastern territories of the caliphate were administered by Manṣūr b. Yazīd¹⁰. Manṣūr was appointed to the post on dhu'l-ḥijja 16th 179 (March 1st 796)¹¹ and he arrived in Nēshāpūr, the governor's capital, still in the same month¹², that is before two weeks passed. We know neither the date of his dismissal nor the date of his successor's appointment. The latter, Ja'far b. Khālīd¹³ is not mentioned at all on the list of the governors of Khorāsān¹⁴. These shortcomings of chronology decrease the accuracy of establishing the date of Ḥamza's appearance. The third successive governor was 'Alī b. 'Isā b. Māhān, a popular, though „black” character. Hārūn al-Rashīd appointed him to this post on jumādā II 2nd 189 A.H. (August 13th 796)¹⁵. The comparison of the two dates of Manṣūr's and 'Alī's appointment, shows that the first action of Ḥamza recorded by Gardēzī could have occurred between March 1st and August 13th. We cannot be much mistaken allotting one month for holding the office by Ja'far b. Yaḥyā. Delimiting thus, the period during which Manṣūr governed in Khorāsān, we close the time of Ḥamza's appearance on the political arena of Khorāsān within two dates: March 10th and July 15th 796 A.D. Transforming this date to the pages of the *Tārīkh-i Sīstān* we find that it can only refer to Ḥamza's quarrel with the 'āmīl and that is the earliest fact attesting his political activity.

Having concluded that the begining of the Ḥamziyya armed movement falls between March 1st and early July of 796 we cannot refer this to the establishing of the foundation of the sect itself, nor to the forming of the initial propositions of the theory propagated by Ḥamza. The theory was aimed at the teaching reform of a larger Khārijite group of 'Ajārīda. In its full shape, such as we know from *Shahristānī*, Ḥamziyya might have been moulded in the course of its founder's activity and undoubtedly it was so. One can prove on the basis of some of its elements, especially those referring to social problems, that the Ḥamziyya originated under

¹⁰ *Zain al-akhbār*, p. 131.

¹¹ Cf. *Ḥamza al-Iṣfahānī*, p. 165.

¹² E. Zambaur, *Manuel de généalogie et de chronologie pour l'histoire de l'Islam*, Hannover 1927, p. 48.

¹³ Tab., III, p. 702.

¹⁴ *Tārīkh-i Sīstān*, pp. 109, 156.

¹⁵ Dīnawarī, p. 386.

the influence of political factors and some of its slogans were created in order to comply with the current situation in Sīstān. The very beginning then, i.e. the exact date of the first founder's meeting cannot be precisely determined at present, though being aware of Ḥamza's energy and his indefatigability we can well presume it had not happened long before his first independent appearance.

The decay of the sect as a military power and ideological factor has been either neglected or presented unclearly¹⁶. R. Rubina c c i is all for recognizing the year 195/810¹⁷ as the date of suppression of the insurrection, but so far he remains isolated in his opinion. R u b i n a c c i has not mentioned the date without reasons, yet there are several arguments against his judgement.

The first stage in the Ḥamziyya history had closed down ten years earlier. After this date the insurrection of Ḥamza does not return any more to the pages of the chronicles concerned with the affairs of the whole caliphate. We read in these sources that in this year the caliph's troops defeated the Khārijite forces but Ḥamza managed to escape at the head of a detachment of forty men, save himself from slaughter and take refuge in the regions of Kābul¹⁸. Such authors as Ṭ a b a r ī, I b n al-Athīr or Y a ' q ū b ī (in *Geography*), do not mention Ḥamziyya any more, what may be regarded as a proof for the fall of insurrection. Besides, it is certain that there were rumours of Ḥamza's death. It was reported that he had been killed near Kābul, reached by a chase set in pursuit of him. It is an example of confusing the details and linking them in wrong relationships, since the news of Ḥamza's death was premature. The leader was still alive and the insurrection went on, though limited to the area of one province, i.e. Sīstān, and becoming a local problem to be dealt with by the governors. Before, the Ḥamziyya had been active on a larger territory engaging greatest forces of the enemy. Perhaps after 185/801 the Khārijites of Ḥamziyya had forces to organize only occasional raids and because of their weakness they could not remain for longer periods anywhere else besides Sīstān. Probably that was the main reason why the general histories of the caliphate ceased to deal with the problem after the caliph troops had gained victory over Ḥamziyya. Local

¹⁶ B. Spuler, *Iran*, p. 53; N. Pigulevskaya, *Istoriya Irana*, pp. 110–111; 'A. Zarrinkūb, *Do qarn-e sokūt*, pp. 466–467; *Dāirat ol-mo'āref*, I, pp. 866–867; M. Mo'in, *Farhang-e zabān-e fārsī*, Tehrān 1345, V, pp. 466–467; E. C. Bosworth, *Sīstān*, p. 105.

¹⁷ 'Ajarida, EI², I; According to B a g h d ā d ī, p. 79, the insurrection started in 179/795 and continued till the beginning of al-Ma'mūn's reign, i.e. still 198/813.

¹⁸ Ṭ a b ., III, p. 650; I b n K a t h ī r, X, p. 186; I b n al-Athīr, VI, p. 103; Y a ' q ū b ī, *Buldān*, p. 305. In *History* (I b n W ā d ī ḥ, *Ta'rikh*, II, p. 554) he did not repeat the news of Ḥamza's death. Y a ' q ū b ī (loc. cit.) writes that Ḥamza took refuge in Kābul and Zābulistān. Ṭ a b a r ī gives Qandahar as the place of his refuge. It would agree with the previous version as Qandahar is situated on the way to Kābul. According to I b n al-Athīr, Ḥamza fled to Kohistān, that is in the opposite direction. If one assumed that the mountainous region was meant there, not the province, then the version of I b n al-Athīr would confirm the previous ones.

chronicles, on the other hand, such as the *Zain al-akhbār* or the *Tārīkh-i Sīstān* which evidently discussed historical details of Sīstān in a more precise way, are a good source of information, well depicting the decade 185–195/801–810. They convincingly demonstrate that in this period the Ḥamziyya receded into the background of the political life in the Eastern borderland of the caliphate. In the result of the defeat in 194/809 the Ḥamziyya had to turn to the defensive¹⁹ and though it rose relatively quickly from the deepest depression under the leadership of a temporary successor of Ḥamza, Abū 'Aqīl²⁰, it never regained the same power as before 194/809. The second severe blow thus breaking the movement down, though not destroying it completely, was identified with bringing the case of Ḥamza to an end.

In the *Tārīkh-i Sīstān* the battle of 194/809 is not mentioned and this circumstance needs explaining as the chronicle is the main source of our knowledge of the insurrection. A more detailed analysis of the text justifies the supposition that an excerpt of an unknown length, dealing with the battle lost by the Khārījites must have been removed from the chronicle. The revising attempts have left a slight but discernible trace, namely there is no coherence between the sentence informing about the death of Hārūn al-Rashīd: *wa-kafā Allāh amīr al-mu'minīn al-qitāl* 'God protected the caliph against the battle' and the next one telling about planned reorganization of the Ḥamziyya troops²¹. In Ḥamza's address quoted by the chronicle he announces the changes and refers to certain events that are not mentioned by the *Tārīkh-i Sīstān* at all. The events must have been of great importance, as they induced or even forced Ḥamza to divide his army into small units and to carry on the war by guerilla methods out of the former action area. Thus, we can interpret it as the announcement of a temporary retreat into distant desert regions. For the same unknown reasons the ideological leader of the insurrection announces his departure for some distant countries to fight the heathens and to rally partisans²².

Such a total reorganization, change in the methods of struggle and the departure or rather the flight of Ḥamza might have been caused only by a crushing defeat. If, as the *Tārīkh-i Sīstān* maintains, the campaign under the leadership of the caliph was stopped because of his death, what had been the use of the above mentioned changes within the sect? The editor's endeavours aimed at hushing up the Ḥam-

¹⁹ It is true (*Tārīkh-i Sīstān*, loc. cit.). B a g h d ā d ī, p. 79, writes that after 195/810 Ḥamza conquered Sīstān, Khorāsān, Kermān and Kohistān. If the informations were precise it would mean that the whole east Iran was seized by the Ḥamziyya insurrection. Next, however, Baghdādī informs that till the end of Hārūn's reign and the beginning of al-Ma'mūn's rule all the troops in the eastern provinces were assembled to fight against Rāfi' b. Laith. It diminished correctness of the first information, as concentration of the army in Transoxania seems improbable in the period when the insurrection spread over half of Iran.

²⁰ *Tārīkh-i Sīstān*, p. 174, v. 3–5.

²¹ Ibid., p. 169 v. 7.

²² The journey, undoubtedly a product of imagination, remains a very complex problem still unexplained to the end. Cf. Malek osh-Sho'arā B a h ā r, *Sabkshe-nāsi*, Tehrān, I, p. 284.

ziyya failure are suggested by the figures given in the chronicle. They refer to the number of the insurgent troops before the war, at the moment of marching out and during the reorganization. Thirty thousand desperadoes went to the war, yet only five thousand were divided in units of five hundred each as a result of the reconstruction of the movement²³. What was the fate of the rest? In our opinion they perished.

The chronicler's rather elaborate suggestion that Hārūn al-Rashīd marched with the army to defeat and destroy Ḥamza is, in my opinion, a later forgery aimed at increasing the importance of the insurrection of Ḥamza in the eyes of posterity. He is presented there as a paragon of virtue and we learn how intensely subjective this attitude is, comparing it to the contrary hostile opinion about Ḥamza and his subordinates represented by Ibn Funduq²⁴. The story about the relationship between the caliph and the rebel, the information that after the death of al-Rashīd in the Persian city of Ṭūs the Arab state machine ceased to operate is similarly not precise. It was just the other way round²⁵. In spite of the changes on the throne as well as the civil war, the state administration was very efficient; it is proved for example by al-Ma'mūn's manoeuvre concerning the insurrection of Rāfi' b. Laith in Transoxania²⁶.

In 194/809, the insurgents were undoubtedly hit hard, yet to suppose that this caused the fall of the insurrection would be a mistake. The compulsory emigration of Ḥamza, the reasons of which are unknown and the aims still remain unexplained, lasted approximately for six years²⁷. In 200/815, Ḥamza returns to Sīstān and takes over the leadership of the Ḥamziyya. During the early years following Ḥamza's return the sect undergoes a short period of awakening and experiences the influx of fresh forces, but does not regain its former status among the Khārijites of Sīstān. Serious modifications caused partly by the changes in political relations in eastern Persia, but most of all in Khorāsān and Transoxania, occurred within the sect itself. They consisted in the increasing drive towards political independence. The Khārijites were joined by a new local element. Those people were less ideologically involved in the khārijism than the Arab immigrants. The latter who were the backbone of the Ḥamziyya up to 194/809 tended to treat the participation in the flights more as a religious dictate²⁸. Therefore, in the period 195–205/810–820, two groups, a conservative and an innovatory one, emerged within the Ḥamziyya. Both fractions recognized the power of Ḥamza who managed to keep them both by himself accept-

²³ *Tārikh-i Sīstān*, p. 168 v. 11; p. 169 v. 10. According to Gardēzī, p. 132, Ḥamza had six thousand soldiers, whereas Nēshāpūrī, his enemy, had 20 000. Baghdādī, p. 80, describes the number of troops belonging to the latter as twenty thousand, but at the same time he mentions Nēshāpūrī in another campaign several years later.

²⁴ Ibn Funduq, p. 44.

²⁵ *Tārikh-i Sīstān*, p. 169 v. 7.

²⁶ *Zain al-akhhbār*, p. 135.

²⁷ Meredith-Owens, *Hamza*.

²⁸ *Tārikh-i Sīstān*, p. 168 v. 10.

ing the social radicalism of the acts which was the concession to conservatists, as well as plunders advertised by the newcomers²⁹. The change in conduct limited the Ḥamziyya influence bringing the sect many enemies. Yet this process reaching back to 194/809 did not develop immediately, and certainly it did not work quickly enough to cause either the sect's dissolution or its deterioration already in the next year.

On jumāda II 12th 213 A.H. (August 28th 823), Ḥamza b. 'Abd Allāh dies holding the position of the leader of the sect till the end of his life. It is the sole unquestionable detail concerning his death. The *Tārīkh-i Sīstān* mentions the name of the place where Ḥamza perished, but the text of the chronicle is illegible in this fragment and the name is distorted, therefore it cannot be identified³⁰. The *Zain al-akhbār* informs that Ḥamza was killed near Kābul. Al-Maqdisī on the other hand maintains that Ḥamza perished drowned in a wādī in Kermān, and that would prove that the tide of the deceased luck turned completely, as it is extremely difficult to get drowned in Kermān, especially in August. According to B a g h d ā d ī, however, Ḥamza was killed after the battle of Nēshāpūr as he wanted to regain Khorāsān some time after he had been driven away by Ṭāhir b. Ḥusain³¹. In this particular case the details are of secondary importance to us, whereas the fact of choosing a new leader of the sect on the day of Ḥamza's death is essential. He was Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm b. 'Umair al-Jāshanī³². The immediate election explicitly shows that the Ḥamziyya was not dissolved on the death of its founder, but on the contrary, it displayed at that very moment remarkable vitality. Soon Abū Ishāq left the Ḥamziyya ranks³³. His renouncement faces us with another problem, i.e. how can we isolate the Ḥamziyya from other Khārijite groups mentioned in the *Tārīkh-i Sīstān* unless we assume that the whole Khārijite movement in this province was united?

²⁹ Ibid., p. 178 v. 3; Ibn Funduq, p. 267.

³⁰ *Tārīkh-i Sīstān*, p. 180 v. 1-2.

³¹ *Zain al-akhbār*, p. 135; Maqdisī, p. 103; B a g h d ā d ī, p. 80. B a g h d ā d ī (loc. cit.) writes that Mas'ūd b. Qais, the leader of the Khārijite sect Khala-fiyya, an enemy of the Ḥamziyya, got drowned in a small tributary of some river in Kermān. We encounter a case of contamination here as it is hardly probable that Khārijite leaders got drowned in Kermān one after another. Mas'ūdī in his *Murūj al-dhahab*, IX, p. 42, wrote that Ḥamza's activity occurred in 'Abd Allāh b. Ṭāhir's days in Khorāsān (213-230/828-845). A literal understanding of this sentence *mā kāna amruhu fī ayyām 'Abd Allāh*, as Ḥamza acted in the time of 'Abd Allāh and not before, cannot be accepted. According to our opinion, this not very accurate information confirms only the convergence of Ḥamza's activity and 'Abd Allāh's ruling in Persia in 213/828.

³² *Tārīkh-i Sīstān*, p. 180 v. 3; in the *Zain al-akhbār*, p. 133, he is called Abū Ishāq-i Qāzī.

³³ *Tārīkh-i Sīstān*, p. 180. After his escape from the Khārijites Abū Ishāq was hiding on one of the islands called Kawēl, on the lake of Hāmūn (Zara) (ibid.). About Abū Ishāq see: Ibn Rustah, *K. al-a'lāq al-nafisa*, ed. de Goeje, Leyden 1892, p. 174. About the sect of shurāt cf. also Iṣṭakhrī, *Masālik al-mamālik*, ed. I. Afshār, Tehrān 1340, p. 211. A Sīstāni scholar Yāsir b. 'Ammār b. Shujā' left the ranks of the Ḥamziyya in 213/828 and two years later a group of 'ulemā left the Khārijites. Cf. *Tārīkh-i Sīstān*, pp. 181, 184, 185.

Until Ḥamza lived it was relatively simple. Though the chronicle does not employ the appellation "*ḥamziyya*", it introduces other terms, as "the Khawārij from the group of Ḥamza's partisans"³⁴ which is sufficient to recognize that the Ḥamziyya group is meant here. The case gets complicated after the death of Ḥamza; as the chronicler does not use this term any more, we do not hear either about the men of Ḥamza or the Khārijite group of Ḥamza, and no other name is introduced that would prove that we encounter the continuation of the Ḥamziyya. Though the affiliation of Abū Ishāq to the Ḥamziyya has been proved there are still certain doubts concerning his successor. We learn from the *Tārikh-i Sīstān* that after Abū Ishāq's renouncement the Khārijites elected Abū 'Awf as a leader³⁵. But we do not know which sect is meant. The context suggests the same group which Abū Ishāq had left, but context in chronicles such as the one quoted above cannot be regarded as a sufficient proof.

A note sent in 247/861 by Ya'qūb b. Laith to 'Ammār-i Khārijī, one of the leaders of the Sīstān Khārijites, can be of some help here: „Your previous activity consisted in this that Ḥamza b. 'Abd Allāh never raided this country, nor did he harm to the inhabitants of Sīstān. He struggled against the representatives of the caliphate power proclaiming: You do injustice! The *ra'āyā* of Sīstān were under his protection. Though the country was then ruled by the foreigners. Later, under Abū Ishāq and Abū 'Awf, countries of the heathen were raided. Now the situation is different. If you wish [Sīstān] prosperity, relinquish the power of caliph, rise with your army and join us as we have rebelled in a good cause not to let anyone do harm to Sīstān. If God Most High helps us we shall increase the territory of Sīstān as much as we possibly can. And if you do not like it, at least do not harm anyone in Sīstān but follow the path of the old Khawārij"³⁶.

Ya'qūb appeals in his letter for unity as well as for following the examples of the past. The general tone of the message implies that Ḥamza, Abū Ishāq and Abū 'Awf were well known and respected in Sīstān, at least in the Khārijite circles, to which Ya'qūb appeals. The first two certainly belonged to the Ḥamziyya. The affiliation of the third is indicated both by the context of information about his being chosen a leader and his classification in the quoted letter.

Abū 'Awf, the new leader of the sect, suffered numerous painful defeats. After the battle of dhu'l-ḥijja 7th 216 (January 15th 832) the Khārijites had to retire to the city of Awq. There Abū 'Awf formed a new group, soon defeated by the Arab commander. Abū 'Awf was probably killed then, as the *Tārikh-i Sīstān* does not mention him again. It was the end of 216 A.H.³⁷ After Abū 'Awf quits the scene some Khārijite groups are still active³⁸ and several years later there appears

³⁴ Ibid., pp. 178, 179.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 180.

³⁶ Ibid., pp. 202–203.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 173. It had to happen between dhu'l-ḥijja 7th and dhu'l-ḥijja 30th 216 A.H. (between January 13th and February 6th 832 A.D.)

³⁸ Ibid., p. 187.

'Ammār-i Khārījī, the addressee of Ya'qūb's letter³⁹. The question arises whether 'Ammār-i Khārījī belonged to the Ḥamziyya. The earliest news of him comes from 238/852, twenty years after the disappearance or death of Abū 'Awf. Taking into consideration that in 238/852 'Ammār-i Khārījī was a well known personage, we can well suppose that his career had begun several years earlier though without obvious reasons we cannot prolong his activity by over two decades to link him in time with Abū 'Awf. In the quoted letter of Ya'qūb neither the affiliation of 'Ammār to any of the Khārījite sect nor his union with the three leaders of the Ḥamziyya are mentioned. If we assumed though that 'Ammār-i Khārījī was one of the successors of Ḥamza, we would admit over twenty years' gap in the written records of the Ḥamziyya. It could be caused by diminished activity of the group and that might mean either the latent life of the sect or its complete dissolution followed by its restoration.

The latter possibility should be rejected, for reviving the movement, in the natural course of things they would return to its primary pure forms of the early radicalism stabilized in Ḥamziyya by memory of Ḥamza's deeds; Ya'qūb attributes the betrayal of these ideas to 'Ammār. This assuming the latent existence of the sect, we should take for granted its ideological stability combined with military weakness, i.e. accept something contrary to our knowledge of the sect. It displayed lesser ideological stability than military values. The sect doctrinally weak for years, and what is more, harassed by military defeats, as well as the death of its founder and internal disintegration⁴⁰, was not able to survive as a separate group in the Khārījite environment. Those member who saved themselves from the slaughter of 216/832 devoid of moral support probably joined the other branches of the khārijisme which only slightly differed in their teachings from the Ḥamziyya. It seems rather improbable for a small group to live latently in an ideologically similar environment for several years without losing its integrity. It is not very probable that the members of Ḥamziyya, reviving the movement did not turn back to the Ḥamza's ideas fixed by tradition but to an indefinite post-Ḥamza period ideology and more pragmatic mode of activity in that time. As there are no particular data concerning the affiliation of 'Ammār-i Khārījī we must leave him out of the Ḥamziyya, considering Abū 'Awf its last leader, after whose death in 216/832 the Ḥamziyya ceased to exist. We possess no evidence that any time later it became a leading force, even going by different name. For the revolt was never a permanent civil war, except for some very short time at its beginning, it was limited merely to some riots against the authorities and its end can be recognized as a failure of the Ḥamziyya insurrection.

³⁹ Ya'qūb ī, *Buldān*, p. 223 — 'Ammār b. Yāsir. Probably he confused him with the Prophet's companion. The same mistake was repeated when the index for BGA was being made.

⁴⁰ The Khārījite movement was not united to the very end. If in the times of 'Ammār other groups were active (*Tārikh-i Sistān*, pp. 205, 207), it is hardly probable that earlier after the death of Abū 'Awf the Khārījites would unexpectedly unite and then desintegrate again after several years without any apparent reason.